

October 1, 2012

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
OCTOBER 1, 2012**

Present: Thomas Creamer, Chairman
Priscilla Gimas
Mary Blanchard
Mary Dowling
Mary Redetzke
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

Appointment of Richard S. Johnson as Firefighter/Paramedic

Fire Chief Leonard Senecal, Captain John Marinelli and Richard Johnson appeared before the Board. S. Suhoski informed the Board that the Fire Chief and Captain undertook a rigorous review of preliminary candidates and advanced three finalists for the position of Firefighter/Paramedic for finalist interviews earlier this week with the Chief, Captain and S. Suhoski. Upon completion of the interview process there was unanimous agreement that Richard S. Johnson of Spencer would be an asset to the Fire Dept. A CORI, background review and references have been checked.

S. Suhoski said that Mr. Johnson currently works full-time as a paramedic for Vital EMS ambulance in Worcester. He is also a member of town of Spencer's call fire department. He has expressed desire to participate in both medical and fire calls, which is noteworthy.

S. Suhoski said that his positive energy and passion for both medic and fire service will be an asset to the department and the community-at-large for years to come and he recommended that the Board ratify his appointment.

Per the contract, Mr. Johnson would be hired at the starting rate of \$19.88 per hour and shall serve a one-year probationary.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Richard S. Johnson to the position of Firefighter-EMT/Paramedic at the hiring rate of \$19.88 per hour and subject to a one-year probationary period, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Chief Senecal advised the Board that he will undergo surgery very soon, and Captain Marinelli will assume management of the Fire Department in his absence.

Chief Senecal advised the Board about the new surplus forestry truck and \$5,000 grant.

Fuel Storage License: 179 Main Street

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the application for fuel storage at 179 Main Street. He noted that it is not for a retail operation, but rather will be the method of fueling the building itself. The plan called for four (4), 1,000 gallon underground storage tanks for propane. M. Redetzke stated that the plan she had only showed three tanks, and asked for clarification and confirmation that there would be no safety issues when and if the fourth tank was installed. The Fire Chief has endorsed the application. S. Suhoski advised that the location of the tanks was shown on the original site plan, according to the Town Planner.

Marlene Adamski and Steve Brown of Osterman Propane appeared before the Board. M. Redetzke said that she was concerned that there was no heat in the building, and would vote to support the installation; however, the owner or his appointed representative should have been present. T. Creamer said that the property owner should be present, as he is ultimately responsible for the permit, and he was not comfortable proceeding without the property owner or a representative thereof in attendance. He further stated that at no time in his memory could he recall a license or permit of this nature being issued to a proponent void of their direct appearance or that of a legal representative before the Board. He stated his preference for the hearing to be delayed until such time as a representative was in attendance.

MOTION: To close the public hearing, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: Four in favor; T. Creamer abstained.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve the fuel storage license for 179 Main Street, filed by 179 Main Street LLC as the property owner, as presented in application endorsed by the Fire Chief on September 12, 2012, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: Two in favor; P. Gimas opposed; T. Creamer and M. Redetzke abstained.

Winebuyer's Outlet: Change of Location

S. Suhoski contacted the applicant to advise that they need to re-advertise and properly notify all certified abutters in accordance with MGL c. 138, Section 15A, as appropriate. They will likely be able to proceed at your October 15th or 22nd meeting. He noted that this action is the responsibility of the applicant and not the Town.

It was the consensus of the Board to defer action pending new notice.

LIQUOR LICENSE VIOLATION HEARINGS:

M. Blanchard read the legal notice into the record.

6:45PM: Champeau-Vilandre Post 109 d/b/a American Legion

This hearing is the result of an allegation and report from the Police Department that an employee of the licensee sold an alcoholic beverage to a person under the age of 21 years. Police Chief Thomas Ford presented the case. Michael Splaine, Manager and Frank Leo, Commander of Post 109 appeared before the Board. M. Splaine acknowledged the offense. F. Leo said that the bartender is 75 years old, and it was his first day on the job.

There were no prior violations noted within the 60-month rolling “look back” period or in the file pre-dating the look back period.

M. Redetzke asked what steps the management has taken to prevent this from occurring in the future. She stated that at this point in time, she will support leniency and vote for no penalty.

MOTION: There will be a one-day suspension of the liquor license for American Legion Post 109, date to be chosen by the Police Chief (who will report back to the Board), with a notice to be posted on the door, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: Four in favor; M. Redetzke opposed.

6:55PM: Chung May, Inc. d/b/a Kahula Restaurant (continued to 10/9/12 @ 6:45pm)

At the request of legal counsel for the alleged violator, the hearing was continued to Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 6:45 p.m.

Approval of Position Description: Data Collector

As part of an efficiency plan in the Assessing Dept. as approved by Annual Town Meeting, S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the proposed job description for a Data Collector position. The description was developed by the Principal Assessor and S. Suhoski and then vetted and formally approved by the Personnel Committee on September 26th at Grade 7 in the non-exempt (hourly employee) compensation plan. S. Suhoski requested the Board’s approval of this position in the plan.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen approve the job description of Data Collector at Grade 7 in the Town’s compensation plan as approved by the Personnel Committee on September 26, 2012, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Appointment of Part-time Data Collector (Board of Assessors)

In order to advance the reorganization as promptly as possible, recruitment for the Data Collector position was undertaken concurrently with the above. The Principal Assessor reviewed the applications and brought forward Brian C. Taylor, of Sturbridge, to be interviewed by me for the position. S. Suhoski met with Mr. Taylor several weeks ago and found him to be knowledgeable and personable. He has a bachelor's degree from Western New England College in sociology and his professional credentials include:

- MA Licensed Real Estate Appraiser
- MA Licensed Real Estate Agent
- Associate Member of the Appraisal Institute
- CT Licensed Real Estate Appraiser
- Professional training (two courses from MAA designation)
- Eighteen years of experience inspecting and valuing real estate as a Licensed Appraiser

Mr. Taylor is more than qualified for the position, but has expressed a strong interest and desire for this part-time employment near his home. Based upon his many qualifications and experience S. Suhoski proposed that he be hired at Step 6 in the compensation plan.

William Mitchell, Principal Assessor, said that there had been 25+ applicants, and three finalists.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Brian C. Taylor to the part-time, non-benefitted position of Data Collector, effective immediately, at a starting hourly rate of \$18.25 (Grade 7, Step 6) and subject to a six-month probationary period, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Economic Development Advisory Committee Discussion

Don Miller and Dave Holland appeared before the Board. D. Miller said that the EDAC had met 14 times over the past year. He gave a thorough overview and update of the EDAC's activities. A lengthy discussion followed. M. Dowling suggested that an icon be put on the Town's website touting economic opportunity.

The Board of Selectmen discussed whether to put the Committee on hold. Ultimately, the Board agreed to have the Town Administrator develop a more focused work plan.

Appointment of Part-time Clerk (Board of Health)

S. Suhoski said that as funded by Town Meeting, the Board of Health has access to a part-time clerk (seven hours/week) to supplement window coverage and basic clerical duties in that office. The Town had two applicants interviewed by the Board of Health Agent, and Ms. Doreen Avallone was selected as the candidate with the most direct experience as she has worked under the SMSP for the Board of Health for several years. S. Suhoski also has personal knowledge of Ms. Avallone's work habits in the Board of Health. She brings a working knowledge of the department operations to the position and will help enhance customer service in that department.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Doreen Avallone to the non-benefitted position of Part-Time Clerk, effective immediately, at a starting hourly rate of \$13.86 (Grade 2, Step 1) and subject to a six-month probationary period, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

Committee Resignations

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board copies of resignations received from Sherri Pelski (Economic Development Advisory Committee) and Jennifer Lundwall (Sturbridge Tourist Association – citizen at large seat).

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation of Sherri Pelski from the Economic Development Advisory Committee with regret and appreciation for her service, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation of Jennifer Lundwall from the Sturbridge Tourist Association with regret and appreciation for her service, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

STA Appointment

S. Suhoski noted that there remain several vacancies on the Sturbridge Tourist Association. This had been advertised in the last round and he has queried the Recreation Committee, Finance Committee and Planning Board to seek a designee from one of those groups as indicated in the bylaw.

One application was received for a citizen-at-large post from Carol Childress. S. Suhoski had the opportunity to discuss the STA and its role with Ms. Childress by telephone and believes that she will bring a strong voice to the committee.

MOTION: That the Board of Selectmen ratify the Town Administrator's appointment of Carol Childress to the Sturbridge Tourist Association to fill an unexpired citizen-at-large term expiring June 30, 2013, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

Other Matters

Following are brief updates on other pending matters.

- **Insurance Advisory Committee:** The IAC meets next on October 3 to further discuss potential plan changes. Representatives of MIIA and from Blue Cross attended the September 19, which was a productive discussion.
- **Riverlands Environmental:** The last round of testing yielded a spike in a lead reading that needs to be delineated. S. Suhoski has a scope-of-work for less than \$500 to complete this single item. If this single item can be shown to be within the MCP limits the site can be cleared; however, he has not yet identified a source of funds, and may seek a reserve fund transfer for this single item.
- **Municipal Buildings:** The Town Hall numbering should be completed in the coming week (simple black "308" installed just above front entryway) to comply with our E-911 responsibility. After several rainstorms it appears that the last bit of sealing completed by the HVAC contractor has alleviated the chronic leak in the Library. The Library Director is monitoring the situation will defer internal aesthetic improvements pending a few more weather events. S. Suhoski has retrieved and compiled the files needed to advance the final warranty claims for the Town Hall / Center Office Building project. The screening of the HVAC units outside Town Hall is a lower priority and remains pending.
- **Walker Pond Drainage:** Tighe & Bond is contracted to complete baseline survey in the Wells Park / Falls Road area. The baseline design will ensure correct elevations as phases of the system are developed. As the project develops, S. Suhoski will seek potential grant funds for portions of the work, including a long-shot effort at a FEMA "Hazard Mitigation Grant."
- **Other Meetings / Miscellaneous:** In addition to the Board's meeting, S. Suhoski also: conducted interviews with three firefighter finalists; met with new Conservation Agent and MassDOT re: solar project site constraints; prepared for and attended Personnel Committee meeting; participated in an organizational training; attended regional town administrator luncheon to discuss potential CMRPC regional grant

ideas; attended Mass. Economic Development Academy at MassDevelopment Devens (Barry Bluestone keynote speaker); met with Veterans Agent regarding several matters.

Old Business

M. Blanchard noted that the Board should ratify its Executive Session vote regarding the contract amendment with the Sturbridge Police Association.

MOTION: To approve the Amendment to Article 19 for the Police contract, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To sign the warrants for the November election, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

M. Blanchard read a proposed proclamation and greeting for Stourbridge, England.

MOTION: That the Board support the proclamation for Rotary Friendship Day, for Stourbridge, England, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: P. Gimas

Vote: All in favor.

New Business

P. Gimas spoke to demands by members of the public or volunteer committees upon Town employees for information. She stated that the employees should not have to cancel their ordinary duties to respond to such requests with immediacy and requested the Board to support the policy.

T. Creamer suggested that such inquiries outside the normal course of business be directed to the Town Administrator for prioritization.

M. Dowling felt this should be part of the Town Administrator's management function without need for a Board policy vote.

S. Suhoski stated that employees do get many requests for information, and, that there is a concern that failure to provide a near-immediate response will result in a public discussion before the Board of Selectmen. This is a concern for the employees.

MOTION: That requests for information outside the ordinary course of business be directed to the Town Administrator to determine priority, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Blanchard

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Vote: All in favor.

T. Creamer announced that the School Committee will meet on October 4th at 6:00 p.m. and will discuss the use of Burgess Elementary School for voting.

M. Blanchard said that she liked S. Suhoski's signage report, and noted that seven lit signs at Sturbridge Gas have been removed.

Ask the Selectmen/Citizens' Forum

There were no calls.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: P. Gimas
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date